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Evaluation of a Year 1 Reading Support Programme

Submission date
07/03/2018

Recruitment status
No longer recruiting

Registration date
16/04/2018

Overall study status
Completed

Last Edited
05/01/2023

Condition category
Mental and Behavioural Disorders

[X] Prospectively registered
[X] Protocol
[X] Statistical analysis plan
[X] Results
[_] Individual participant data

Plain English summary of protocol

Background and study aims
A global goal of education is to improve standards of literacy (the ability to read and write). In England, the latest national results for children in years 3-6, aged 7-11 (key stage 2) indicate that only 71% of pupils met the expected standard in reading (DfE 2017). As such it is important that research continues to find effective approaches to increase literacy skills.

Who can participate?
Year 1 pupils in participating schools

What does the study involve?
Participating schools are randomly assigned to one of three groups:
Those in the first group deliver a programme (ABRA) to small groups of participants via online software. This is conducted by a specially trained member of staff for four 15 minute sessions per week.
Those in the second group also have four 15 minute sessions per week but the ABRA programme is delivered using a paper based version.
Schools in the control group continue with usual teaching with a small group of pupils (approx. 5 pre-randomsiation) and deliver additional small group teaching similar to that which is being delivered in the intervention schools. The content of this additional small group teaching is completely up to the school but must be literacy based and cannot be ABRA.

What are the possible benefits and risks of participating?
There are no direct benefits or risks for those taking part in the study.

Where is the study run from?
201 primary schools in West Midlands, East Midlands, Newcastle, Teeside and Manchester (UK)

When is the study starting and how long is it expected to run for?
May 2017 to March 2022

Who is funding the study?
Education Endowment Foundation (UK)

Who is the main contact?
Kerry Bell, kerry.bell@york.ac.uk

Contact information

Type(s)
Scientific

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Protocol serial number
V1.0

Study information

Scientific Title
Independent evaluation of small group reading support programmes to improve literacy in Year 1 pupils: a three-armed cluster randomised controlled trial

Acronym
ABRA

Study objectives
This study aims to investigate the effectiveness of an ICT based small group reading support programme (ABRA) delivered at scale and an equivalent non-ICT small group reading support programme delivered at scale to pupils in Year 1 on literacy development.

How effective is the ABRA - ICT delivery model compared with an equivalent non-ICT paper-based small group reading support programme (non-ICT delivery model) in increasing the literacy skills of pupils in Year 1?

If the ABRA - ICT and the non-ICT delivery models are found to have similar effects:
How effective is the small group reading support programme (ABRA - ICT and non-ICT delivery models) in increasing the literacy skills of pupils in Year 1?

If delivery models are found to have different effects:
How effective is ABRA - ICT delivery model compared with usual practice in increasing the literacy skills of pupils in Year 1?

How effective is an equivalent non-ICT paper based delivery model compared with usual practice in increasing the literacy skills of pupils in Year 1?

Ethics approval required
Old ethics approval format

Ethics approval(s)
1. Durham University School of Education Ethics Committee, March/April 2018 - submission pending
2. Durham University School of Education Ethics Committee approved the Memorandum of Understanding for Schools (V6:20171218), 10/01/2018, no reference number.

Primary study design
Interventional

Study design
Pragmatic three-arm cluster randomised effectiveness trial

Study type(s)
Other

Health condition(s) or problem(s) studied
Literacy skills

Interventions
Participating schools are randomly assigned to one of three study arms:
1. ABRA – ICT Delivery: Year 1 children in groups of 3-5 pupils work with a specially trained member of school staff using the ABRA online software for a minimum of four 15 minute sessions per week for 20 weeks during the academic year 2018/2019.
2. ABRA – non-ICT Delivery: Year 1 children in groups of 3-5 pupils work with a specially trained member of school staff using a paper-based version of the ABRA intervention for a minimum of four 15 minute sessions per week for 20 weeks during the academic year 2018/2019.

Both ABRA programmes focus on teaching a balanced reading curriculum to improve attainment. Essential elements of the intervention are:
• A systematic and structured approach to reading
• Evidence based skills learned through a variety of activities linked to real books
• Technology
• Small group work and discussion
• Development of a rich language environment
• Valuing and using pupils' reflections

3. 'Business as usual' Approach: Schools in the control group are asked to continue with usual teaching with Year 1 pupils in 2018/2019. Schools are asked to select a small group of pupils (approx. 5 pre-randomsiation) and deliver additional small group teaching similar to that which is being delivered in the intervention schools. The content of this additional small group teaching is completely up to the school but must be literacy based and cannot be ABRA.

Participants are assessed at baseline and 1 year follow up, with tests administered by an independent administrator blinded to allocation.

Intervention Type
Behavioural

Primary outcome(s)
Reading ability is assessed using the Progress in Reading Assessment (PiRA) test at baseline and 1 year follow up.

Key secondary outcome(s)
The following secondary outcomes are collected on a sub-sample of participants (approximately 1800 participants):
1. Reading ability is assessed using the Diagnostic Test of Word Reading Processes (DTWRP) at 1 year follow up.
2. Ability to sound out single letters and letter combination is assessed using the Letter Sound Test (LeST) at 1 year follow up.
3. Reading attitudes are assessed using a survey at 1 year follow up.
4. Long term academic outcomes may be collected from the National Pupil Databse, for example KS1 outcomes at 2 year follow up.

Completion date
31/03/2022

Eligibility

Key inclusion criteria
1. Year 1 pupils in participating classes at participating schools

Participant type(s)
Other

Healthy volunteers allowed
No

Age group
Child

Sex
All

Total final enrolment
4007

Key exclusion criteria
No exclusion criteria

Date of first enrolment
01/09/2018

Date of final enrolment
30/12/2018

Locations

Countries of recruitment
United Kingdom

Study participating centre
Schools recruited from West Midlands, East Midlands, Newcastle, Teeside and Manchester
United Kingdom
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Sponsor information

Organisation
University of York

ROR
https://ror.org/04m01e293

Funder(s)

Funder type
Charity

Funder Name
Education Endowment Foundation

Alternative Name(s)
EducEndowFoundn, The Education Endowment Foundation (EEF), Education Endowment Foundation | London, EEF

Funding Body Type
Private sector organisation

Funding Body Subtype
Trusts, charities, foundations (both public and private)

Location
United Kingdom

Results and Publications

Individual participant data (IPD) sharing plan
The datasets generated during and/or analysed during the current study will be deposited in the EEF Data Archive (in association with the Fischer Family Trust). Enquiries to FFT's Datalab can be made via educationdatalab@fft.org.uk. Participants are made aware that data will be placed in the repository. Both an anonymised, and pseudonymised dataset are uploaded. Pupil Matching Reference (PMR) is provided to allow pupil data to be matched to the NPD for long-term follow-up of educational attainment. Unique Pupil Numbers are not uploaded. Data should be available in the repository 1 month after submission of final report.

IPD sharing plan summary
Stored in repository

Study outputs

Output type	Details	Date created	Date added	Peer reviewed?	Patient-facing?
Funder report results		22/09/2022	05/01/2023	No	No
Protocol file		11/07/2019	18/08/2022	No	No
Statistical Analysis Plan	version 1.0	03/06/2019	18/08/2022	No	No
Study website	Study website	11/11/2025	11/11/2025	No	Yes